

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02

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R 312015Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1254

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PORT AU PRINCE 3222

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINS, HA

SUBJECT: DUVALIER RELEASES ADDITIONAL POLITICAL AND OTHER PRISONERS
IN ACT OF CHRISTMAS CLEMENCY

REF: A) PORT AU PRINCE 2857 (SECTION E), B) PORT AU PRINCE A-109,

C) PORT AU PRINCE A-93; D) 72 PORT AU PRINCE A-107

1. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. SUMMARY. ON DEC 22 PRES. JEAN-CLAUDE DUVALIER SIGNED A DECREE (HIS FIFTH IN FOUR YEARS) PARDONING AND RELEASING 31 HAITIAN PRISONERS AND REDUCING THE SENTENCES OF 10 OTHERS. THE NEWS CAME OUT SOME DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS. AT LEAST 7 OF THE 31 CAN BE IDENTIFIED AS POLITICAL PRISONERS IN BROAD SENSE. FIVE OF THEM WERE CONVICTED BY A MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR CONSPIRING IN 1972 TO PROVOKE DISSENSION AND REVOLT AGAINST REGIME. TWO OTHERS (ONE ALLEGEDLY A PERMANENT RESIDENT OF THE US) WERE EVIDENTLY ARRESTED IN 1970 AND 1971 RESPECTIVELY ON SUSPICION OF SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES, THOUGH THE NATURE OF THEIR OFFENSES HAS NOT BEEN EXPLAINED. THE REMAINDER OF THOSE RELEASED (24) ARE PROBABLY COMMON CRIMINALS NEAR THE END OF THEIR SENTENCES, OR PERHAPS UNEDUCATED PERSONS ASSOCIATED WITH MORE PROMINENT PEOPLE SUSPECTED OF SUBVERSION. AS WITH PREVIOUS SUCH ACTS OF CLEMENCY, GOH HAS MADE NO ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN ITS ACTIONS OR TO CLEAR UP THE RECORD ON POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE MANNER OF A WHITE PAPER. HOWEVER, DUVALIER HAS NOW SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED THE POPULATION OF

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HAITIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS THROUGH HIS PERIODIC RELEASES,

AND HAS NOT ADDED ANY NEW ONES FOR ABOUT 3 YEARS. DEPENDING ON HOW THEY ARE DEFINED, THE NUMBER OF HAITIAN PRISONERS REMAINING IN JAIL FOR POLITICAL OR QUASI-POLITICAL REASONS MAY RANGE FROM LESS THAN 20 TO POSSIBLY 100. END SUMMARY. END CONFIDENTIAL.

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. HAITIAN NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED ON DEC 29 REVEALED THAT, BY DECREE DATED DEC 22, 1975, PRES. DUVALIER HAD GIVEN FULL PARDON TO 31 PRISONERS, WHO WERE PROMPTLY RELEASED FROM NATIONAL PENITENTIARY BY SECRETARY OF JUSTICE AURELIEN JEANTY. DECREE ALSO REDUCED SENTENCES OF 10 OTHER PRISONERS CONVICTED BY VARIOUS CRIMINAL COURTS IN HAITI.

3. PRISONERS PARDONED AND RELEASED WERE THE FOLLOWING:

1. FREDERICK SENEGILES
2. EVINCE PETIT-HOMME
3. FERDINAND JEAN-LOUIS
4. ORISMOND SANT-FORT
5. JACQUES LEON JEAN
6. ISAAC TI JACQUES
7. THIMOLEON PARET
8. EUGENE ROSIER
9. SAINTILME NOEL
10. PIERRISAINT RINVIL
11. OSWALD HYPPOLITE
12. LEVEILLE T JULES
13. MAUREPAS ALCINDOR
14. RAGUEL NICOLAS
15. LHOMME PIERRE
16. MAX BAZELAIS
17. LISSON LIEZAIRES
18. MEMOIRE PETIT-FRERE
19. SEBASTIANI ALLEN
20. DERILUS JEANTILUS
21. FREZILUS GABRIEL
22. FULBERT CHARLES
23. ADELINE PLAISIMOND
24. SAUVEUR MASSILLON
25. GUY VAVAL

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26. FELIX PIERRE
27. ALTEUS JOSEPH
28. EMYSTIL ORELUS
29. GEORGES RICHARD
30. JEAN-CLAUDE JOSEPH
31. CHARITE FRANCOIS

4. REDUCTIONS OF SENTENCES WERE AS FOLLOWS:

-ORIOL STENORD (CONVICTED IN PORT-DE-PAIX 5/2/75; FROM 10 YEARS HARD LABOR TO 7 YEARS);

-DIEUBON JEAN (CONVICTED IN PORT-DE-PAIX 5/2/75; 10 TO 7 YEARS);

-MADAME SAGILON HERCULE (CONVICTED IN LES CAYES 12/16/74; 10 TO 7 YEARS);

-PRADERE RICHARD (CONVICTED IN CAP HAITIEN 7/16/73; 10 TO 7 YEARS);

-CASIMIR CHARLES (CONVICTED IN GONAIVES 2/21/72; 7 TO 5 YEARS);

-TIBOLAN VIXAMAR (CONVICTED IN PORT-DE-PAIX 6/1/70; 10 TO 7 YEARS);

-MARCEL PIERRE (CONVICTED IN PORT-AU-PRINCE 3/18/75: DEATH TO LIFE AT HARD LABOR);

-CLAUDIUS DADE (SAME AS MARCEL PIERRE);

-ANDRE EXUME (CONVICTED AT PETIT-GOAVE 4/23/75: DEATH TO LIFE AT HARD LABOR);

-GERARD CHERY (SAME AS ANDRE EXUME).

5. AS WITH JEAN-CLAUDE DUVALIER'S 4 PREVIOUS ACTS OF CLEMENCY (REF A), THE ANNOUNCEMENT MADE NO EXPLANATION OF RELEASES, DID NOT SPECIFY PREVIOUS CHARGES OR CONVICTIONS, AND GAVE NO INDICATION AS TO WHICH PRISONERS HAD BEEN JAILED FOR OPPOSITION TO REGIME AS DISTINCT FROM THOSE WHOSE OFFENSES WERE CLEARLY CONFIDENTIAL

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NON-POLITICAL. FULL TEXT OF DECREE AND ACCOMPANYING PRESS ARTICLES ARE BEING POUCED TO DEPARTMENT (ARA-LA/CAR/H), BUT THEY REVEAL NOTHING OF SUBSTANCE BEYOND FOREGOING. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1255

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6. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. EMBASSY IS ABLE TO IDENTIFY 7 OF THE 31 RELEASED AS POLITICAL PRISONERS (SEE BELOW). WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON REMAINDER, MANY OF WHOSE NAMES SUGGEST THEY ARE OF HUMBLE STATION -- POSSIBLY COMMON CRIMINALS OR PERSONS SOMEHOW ASSOCIATED WITH THE MORE SIGNIFICANT PRISONERS RELEASED. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON THE 10 PRISONERS WHOSE SENTENCES WERE REDUCED, AND HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THEY INCLUDE POLITICAL CASES.

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7. JACQUES LEON-JEAN, FORMER DEPUTY FROM THE CAP HAITIEN DISTRICT; COL. THIMOLEON PARET (RETIRED 1958); LTC OSWALD HYPPOLITE (RETIRED 1963); LTC MAUREPAS ALCINDOR (RETIRED, DATE UNKNOWN); AND LTC MAX BAZELAIS (RETIRED 1957) WERE ALL ARRESTED IN AUGUST 1972 AND WERE AMONG THOSE CONVICTED ON JUNE 18, 1974 BY A MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR PLOTTING AGAINST THE SECURITY OF THE STATE. THEY WERE SENTENCED TO 9 YEARS' INCARCERATION (SEE REF B). ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE, ALCINDOR WAS RELEASED IN POOR PHYSICAL CONDITION, POSSIBLY THE RESULT OF PAST BRUTAL HANDLING WHILE IN PRISON. LEON-JEAN WAS THE KINGPIN OF THIS GROUP, WHOSE OPPOSITION TO DUVALIERIST REGIME WAS EXPRESSED PRIMARILY IN SEMI-MYSTICAL MEETINGS RATHER THAN BY CONCRETE MEASURES SUCH AS SMUGGLING ARMS. LEON-JEAN MAY HAVE HAD UNREALISTIC PRESIDENTIAL AMBITIONS. THREE OF THE RETIRED OFFICERS WERE REPORTEDLY ACADEMY CLASSMATES OF EX-PRESIDENT PAUL MAGLOIRE. ONE OF THEM (PARET) WAS HAITIAN MILITARY ATTACHE

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IN WASHINGTON DURING 1950'S. ANOTHER (HYPPOLITE) WAS BRIEFLY A CABINET MINISTER DURING KEBREAU JUNTA OF 1957. THE ARRESTS WERE A SEQUEL TO THE KIDNAPPING IN AUGUST 1972 OF THE FOUR-YEAR-OLD SON OF THE LATE COMMERCE SECRETARY LEBERT JEAN-PIERRE. THE KIDNAPPER, WHEN CAUGHT, REVEALED THE "COLONELS' PLOT"

AND THE GOH PURSUED IT VIGOROUSLY. NO OBSERVERS BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT EITHER LEON-JEAN OR THE EX-COLONELS HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE KIDNAPPING ITSELF.

8. GUY VAVAL IS REPORTED BY EMBASSY SOURCES POSSIBLY TO HAVE BEEN ARRESTED PURSUANT TO THE COAST GUARD REVOLT OF 1970. AT THAT TIME HE WAS REPORTEDLY A STAFF EMPLOYEE OF THE NATIONAL BANK (BNRH). HE IS ONE OF SEVERAL BROTHERS AND COUSINS OF THE VAVAL FAMILY, SOME OF WHOM WERE FREQUENTLY IN TROUBLE WITH THE DUVALIERISTS AT THE HEIGHT OF THE REPRESSION. GUY HIMSELF, HOWEVER, MAY HAVE BEEN PRO-DUVALIER BUT TOO CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE REBEL COAST GUARD COMMANDANT, COL. CAYARD. AMONG EMBASSY SOURCES, THERE IS SOME CONFUSION OF GUY VAVAL'S IDENTITY WITH SOME OF HIS RELATIVES, AS WELL AS TO WHETHER HE EVER PLAYED AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE REVOLT. HE MAY HAVE BEEN A VICTIM OF GUILT BY ASSOCIATION.

9. SEBASTIANI ALLEN IS IDENTIFIED BY EMBASSY SOURCES AS A FORMER SALESMAN OR COMMISSION AGENT, ALLEGEDLY A PERMANENT RESIDENT OF THE US (QUEENS, N.Y.). HE IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN ARRESTED IN 1965, THEN RELEASED, AFTER WHICH HE SPENT SOME EXTENDED PERIOD IN THE US ALONG WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN. ON HIS RETURN TO HAITI, HE WAS REPORTEDLY ARRESTED AGAIN IN 1971 AND HAS PRESUMABLY BEEN INCARCERATED SINCE THAT TIME -- WE DO NOT KNOW ON WHAT CHARGES. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCES, ALLEN'S NATURALIZED AMCIT DAUGHTER HAS JUST ARRIVED IN HAITI TO JOIN HIM, AND HAS FOUND HIM EMACIATED AS COMPARED WITH EARLIER YEARS, THOUGH PHYSICALLY WELL AND NOT MALTREATED. NEITHER ALLEN NOR HIS DAUGHTER HAS MADE CONTACT WITH EMBASSY AS YET. IF THEY SHOULD DO SO, WE WILL REPORT THEIR STORY.

10. MORE GENERALLY, EMBASSY WILL REPORT ANY FURTHER SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE DEVELOPED ABOUT THESE PRISONERS AND THEIR RELEASE.

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